COMMEMORATIVE EDITION

MICHIGAN ALUM

WINTER 2023-24

Business is Finished

U-M caps a historic three-year run with a national championship win

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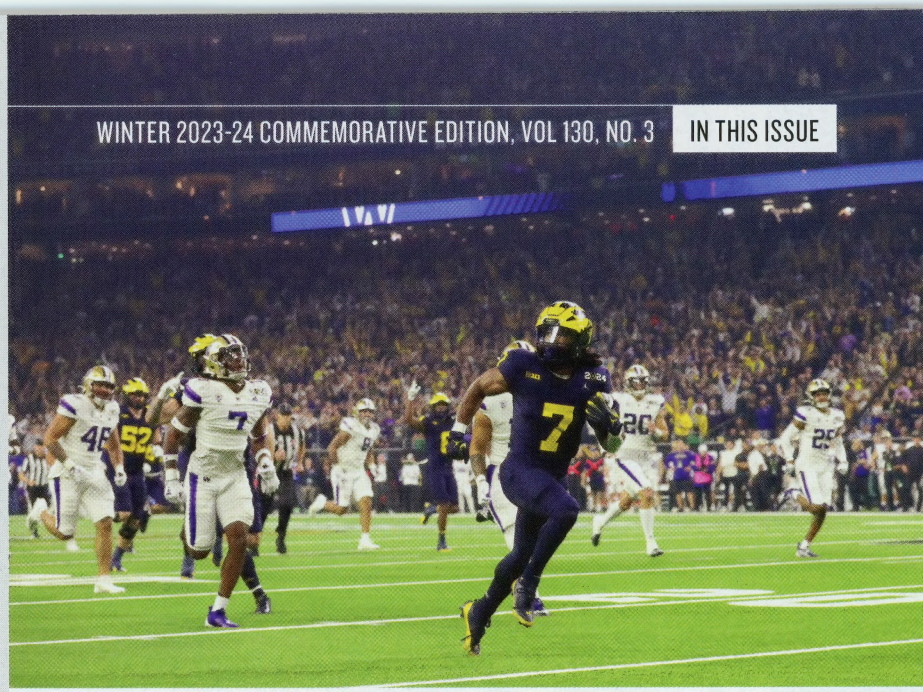

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Cover photo by CFP Images

HAIL TO THE VICTORS!™

Congratulations to Team 144 on their National Championship win!

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Bringing Everyone Together

Has there ever been a better time to be a Michigan Wolverine?

Heading into the new year, Wolverines from everywhere descended on Southern California to galvanize support for Team 144 in their pursuit of a Rose Bowl victory. Elation ensued, followed by focused energy to support the team on their journey to the national championship in Houston.

More than 1,700 travelers joined the Alumni Territory tour and convened in Space City for a series of events leading up to the national championship game. The Alumni Association team delivered memorable experiences, including an exclusive night at Space Center Houston and an aMAIZing pep rally featuring the alums and comedians Sklar Brothers along with current student Daisy Sklar, the Michigan Marching Band, Chip Englander's winning shot, and a soul-stirring speech by Jon Jansen, '98, that had everyone fired up and ready to lace up for the big game.

NRG Stadium sounded like the Big House as Coach Jim Harbaugh, '86, and Team 144 found the "Brightside" of victory against the Washington Huskies.

We hope you enjoy this special edition of Michigan Alum that celebrates this remarkable season.

For me, the jubilation of the national championship victory was rivaled by the joy, connection, and community among U-M alumni. The memories you shared with me during the tour, and new memories made with fellow Wolverines, underscore the Association's mission to connect alumni with each other and the University. I invite you to activate that pride beyond the Natty. Because we are the champions!

AYANNA MCCONNELL is the president and CEO of the Alumni Association of the University of Michigan.

Staying True Maize and Blue

"National Champions."

Many of us have been waiting for a long time to say those words, and to savor them with pride.

Our victory over the University of Washington ended the waiting — capping an undefeated season with a record of 15-0, an overtime win against Alabama in the Rose Bowl, our third consecutive Big Ten Championship, and our third successive victory over Ohio State. We're the winningest college football program in the country with 1,004 victories … and counting.

But there was so much more to the season than that sweet moment of victory. For our team had to overcome incredible adversity — unexpected challenges that could have broken their spirit — but instead, brought them together and made them stronger.

That's true for all of you, our U-M alumni.

In challenging seasons, amid heartbreaking losses, and during times of turmoil and questioning, you stayed true Maize and Blue.

That sustained commitment, that passion, that unrelenting pride is what makes you the best alumni in the nation.

And it's not just our football team that had an exceptional season.

Our student-athletes won a record 13 Big Ten Championships, and earned a record of almost 700 U-M Athletic Academic Achievement Awards. In December, nearly 150 of our student-athletes were named to the Academic All-Big Ten Team.

All of us should savor those achievements, and take great pride in not only our 12th football National Championship, but in our place as an exceptional university.

Thank you again for being outstanding alumni.

A championship, a moment, and a lifetime — Go Blue!

SANTA J. ONO is the president of the University of Michigan.

PHOTOS BY JEREMY CARROLL

VICTORS
U-M offensive lineman Tristan Bounds screams for joy as confetti rains down following the Wolverines' first national championship victory since 1997.

PHOTO BY GETTY IMAGES

BIG
26

STAY SANE
IN AN INSANE WORLD

FOREWORD BY TOM BRADY

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–TOM BRADY, SUPER BOWL MVP

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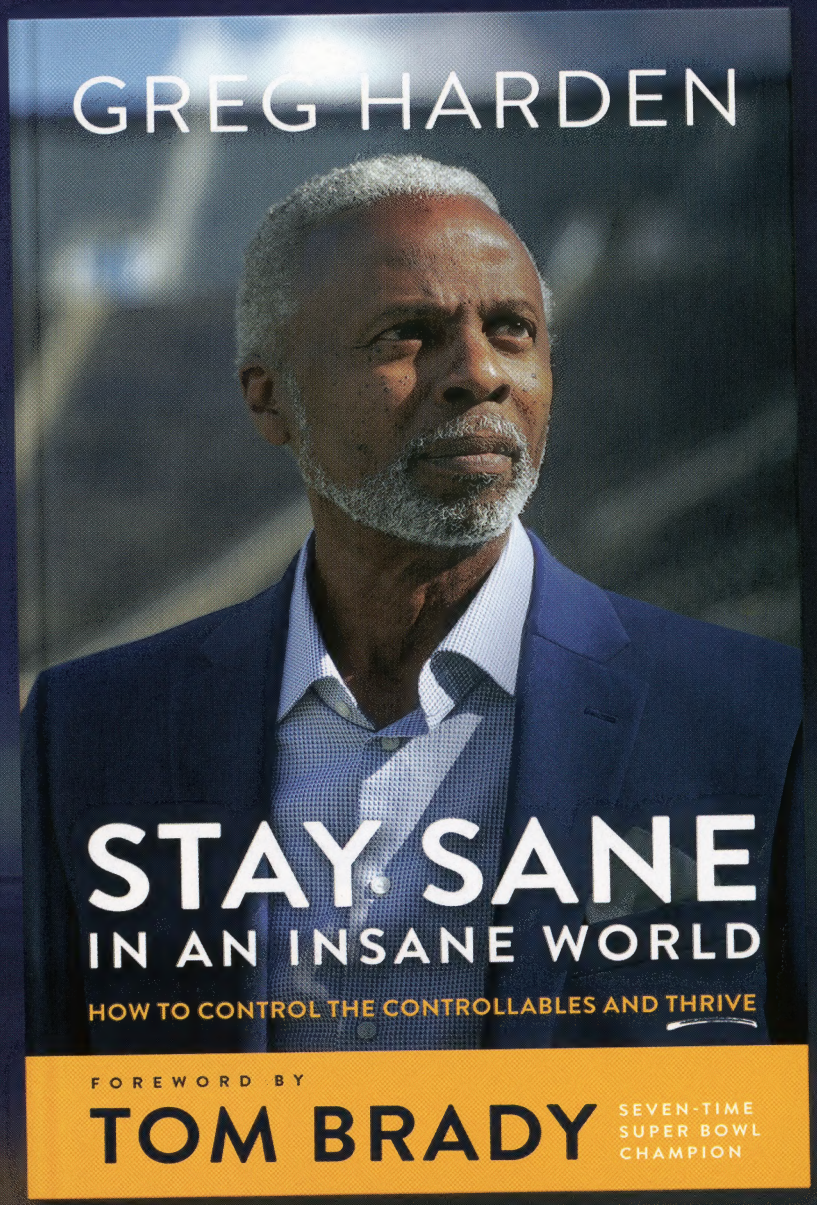
–DESMOND HOWARD,
HEISMAN TROPHY WINNER



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A SEASON TO REMEMBER

The Wolverines came into this season on the heels of two stellar years. Michigan won back-to-back Big Ten championships in 2021 and 2022, and secured back-to-back victories against Ohio State, the team's first wins against its hated rival since 2011. But U-M also suffered back-to-back defeats in the College Football Playoff semifinals, losing to Georgia and Texas Christian.

Several key players, including Blake Corum, '23, Cornelius Johnson, '22, Zak Zinter, '23, and Trevor Keegan, '23, decided to forgo entering the NFL Draft in an attempt to make a run at a national championship.

But the season started on a sour note. Head coach Jim Harbaugh, '86, was suspended for the first three games for his role in alleged recruiting violations. Investigators reportedly accused Harbaugh of having impermissible contact with recruits during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic and then refusing to cooperate with the probe. Harbaugh denied the allegations, but the University suspended Harbaugh after a proposed agreement with the NCAA reportedly fell through.

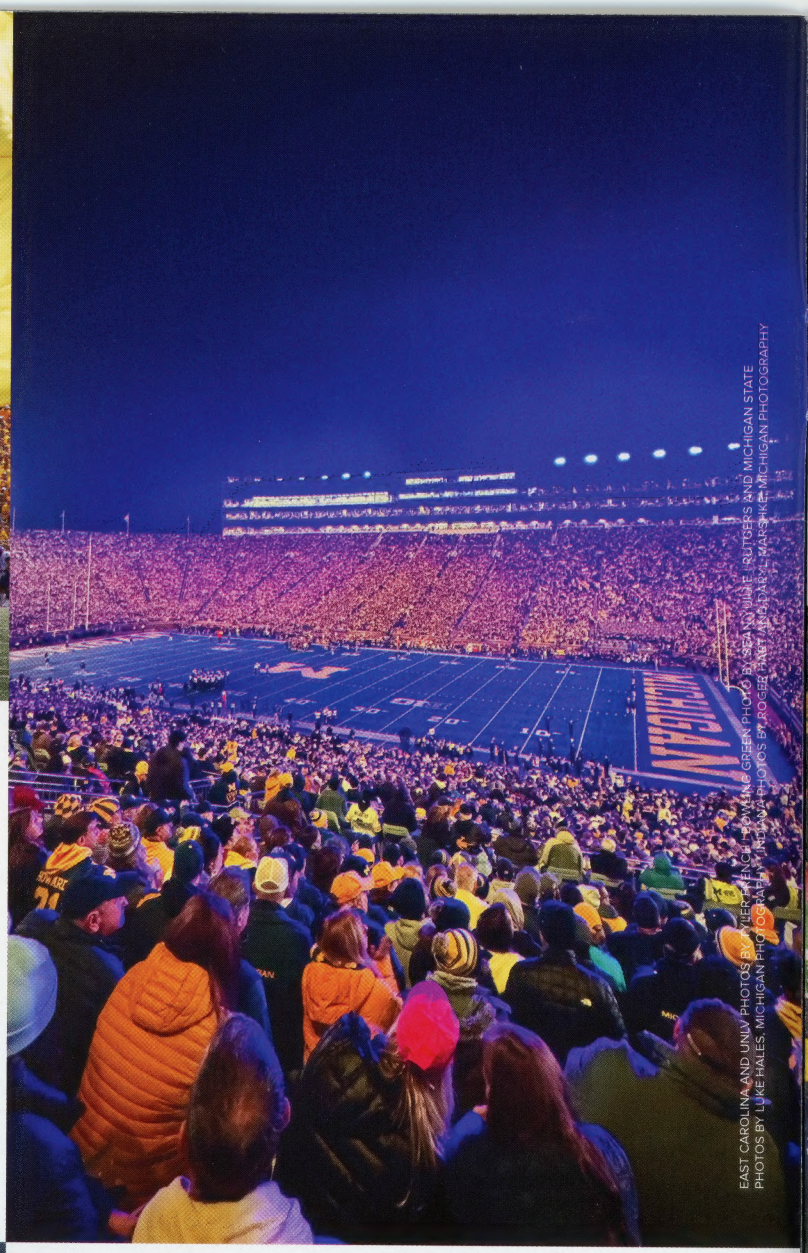
During the first three games, U-M rotated who served as acting head coach. Defensive coordinator Jesse Minter, running backs coach Mike Hart, '08, and offensive coordinator Sherrone Moore split duties.

Moore coached the final three regular season games after Harbaugh was suspended again. This time, the Big Ten alleged U-M participated in illegal sign stealing. Harbaugh maintained that he was unaware of the actions of staffer Connor Stallions.

Despite the off-the-field distractions, the team remained focused and didn't miss a beat on the field, running the table in the regular season before claiming the team's third-straight Big Ten championship.

Here is a game-by-game recap of the season. →

PHOTO BY ROGER HART, MICHIGAN PHOTOGRAPHY



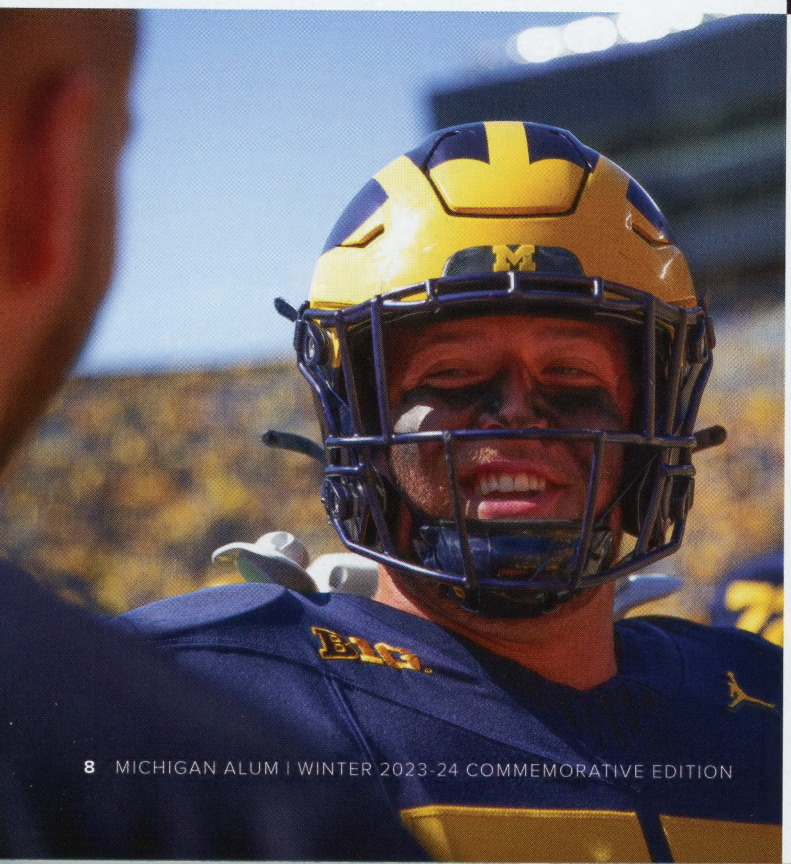
EAST CAROLINA AND UNLV PHOTOS BY TYLER HILL | BOWLING GREEN PHOTO BY SEAN DUBE | RUTGERS AND MICHIGAN STATE PHOTOS BY LUKE HALES, MICHIGAN PHOTOGRAPHY | INDIANA PHOTOS BY ROGER FAST AND PAT MARSHALL, MICHIGAN PHOTOGRAPHY

SEPT. 2
ANN ARBOR
NO. 2 U-M 30
EAST CAROLINA 3

In the first meeting between the two teams, U-M dominated East Carolina on both sides of the ball. U-M's defense held East Carolina to just 235 yards of total offense and created one turnover. Quarterback J.J. McCarthy had an outstanding day, going 26-30 for 280 yards with three touchdowns. Wide receiver Roman Wilson, '23, caught all three touchdown passes.

SEPT. 9
ANN ARBOR
NO. 2 U-M 35
UNLV 7

The Wolverines picked up exactly as they left off against East Carolina when taking on the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) inside Michigan Stadium. McCarthy went 22-25 for 278 yards with two touchdowns, with all of his scores once again going to Wilson. Running back Blake Corum, '23, had 80 rushing yards and three touchdowns. UNLV scored late in the game once Michigan had pulled most of its starters.



SEPT. 16
ANN ARBOR
NO. 2 U-M 31
BOWLING GREEN 6

After Michigan jumped to a quick 7-0 lead against Bowling Green, the Wolverines struggled against the team from the Mid-American Conference. The offense gave up three total turnovers in the first half, but still took a 14-6 lead into halftime. U-M's defense came up big in the third quarter as defensive tackle Kris Jenkins intercepted a Bowling Green pass inside the Falcons' 10-yard line. That play set up a two-yard touchdown run by Corum. U-M forced another turnover on the next possession and eventually cruised to a 31-6 victory. The game was held under the lights at the Big House and included a show from new LED lights installed during the off-season.

SEPT. 23
ANN ARBOR
NO. 2 U-M 31
RUTGERS 7

U-M opened Big Ten play on homecoming weekend against Rutgers and the Scarlet Knights took the lead early on a long touchdown pass. It was the first time U-M trailed all season, but the Wolverines answered with 31 straight points. U-M's defense created three turnovers and Corum had 97 rushing yards and two touchdowns.

SEPT. 30
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA
NO. 2 U-M 45
NEBRASKA 7

After five straight home games to start the season, U-M traveled to Nebraska to take on the Cornhuskers. McCarthy hit Wilson for a 29-yard touchdown pass on the opening drive and and defensive lineman Kenneth Grant picked off Nebraska on the next possession. The Wolverines jumped to a quick 14-0 lead and didn't look back, beating Nebraska 45-7. Wilson notched another two receiving touchdowns and Corum added a rushing score.

OCT. 7
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA
NO. 2 U-M 52
MINNESOTA 10

U-M retained the Little Brown Jug in a convincing fashion. On the second play from scrimmage, cornerback Will Johnson intercepted a pass and returned it for a touchdown. That was one of two pick-six scores by Michigan in the game. U-M's offense was humming and its defense held Minnesota to just 169 total yards. Seventy-three of the 74 players on U-M's roster played in the game and helped secure the win.

OCT. 14
ANN ARBOR
NO. 2 U-M 52
INDIANA 7

U-M returned home to take on Indiana in the rain. The Hoosiers took the lead early, ending the first quarter up 7-0. But that would be the only time Indiana scored as as U-M racked up 52 points on their next eight possessions. Corum had two rushing touchdowns and McCarthy threw for three scores before stepping off the field early.

OCT. 21
EAST LANSING, MICHIGAN
NO. 2 U-M 49
MICHIGAN STATE 0

In a night game at Spartan Stadium, U-M blew out Michigan State 49-0 to retain the Paul Bunyan Trophy. McCarthy threw for four touchdowns and Michigan's defense held the Spartans to just 10 rushing yards in the first half and a total of just 10 first downs in the game. It was Michigan's 20th consecutive Big Ten victory, a new program record.

NOV. 4
ANN ARBOR
NO. 3 U-M 41
PURDUE 13

The first College Football Playoff ranking was released before U-M played Purdue, and despite being No. 2 in The Associated Press and Coaches Poll for most of the season, the Wolverines were No. 3 behind Georgia and Ohio State. Corum scored on each of U-M's first two possessions and Michigan cruised to a 41-13 victory under the lights at the Big House.

NOV. 11
UNIVERSITY PARK, PENNSYLVANIA
NO. 3 U-M 24
NO. 10 PENN STATE 15

As the team was traveling to its first major test of the season, Big Ten commissioner Tony Petitti announced that Harbaugh would be suspended for the remainder of the regular season for the alleged sign-stealing scandal. Michigan took a 14-9 halftime lead with rushing touchdowns from Corum and Donovan Edwards. U-M's defense forced a fumble and a turnover on downs in the second half and held Penn State to just 74 passing yards for the entire game. The Wolverines kept the ball on the ground, running 32 consecutive rushing plays to end the game. U-M did not throw a pass in the entire second half. Penn State scored late, but a two-point conversion and on-side kick both failed and U-M ran out the clock to secure the critical win.

NOV. 18
COLLEGE PARK, MARYLAND
NO. 3 U-M 31
MARYLAND 24

U-M challenged the Big Ten's suspension of Harbaugh in court, but dropped the effort shortly before the Wolverines traveled to Maryland. U-M took a 23-10 halftime lead. Maryland responded in the third quarter, but a touchdown run by Michigan's Semaj Morgan gave the Wolverines the cushion it needed to come home with the victory. U-M's Mike Sainristil, '22, had two interceptions in the game and Corum recorded his 20th touchdown of the season. The win was U-M's 1,000th victory in the program's history, becoming the first university to reach that mark.

NOV. 25
ANN ARBOR
NO. 3 U-M 30
NO. 2 OHIO STATE 24

In the 119th edition of The Game, a trip to the Big Ten championship game and a possible slot in the College Football Playoff was on the line. It was the second straight year that the two teams came into the matchup ranked in the top three. After U-M's Will Johnson intercepted a pass, Corum scored on a fourth down play from the one-yard line to take an early lead. McCarthy hit Wilson for a 22-yard touchdown in the second quarter and U-M secured a 14-10 halftime lead. Tied at 17 in the third quarter, U-M All-American guard Zak Zinter, '23, was injured, breaking his leg. On the first play after the injury, Corum scored on a 22-yard run. The two teams traded scores and Michigan kicked a field goal to go up 30-24. Ohio State's final drive ended when defensive back Rod Moore intercepted a pass on the 22-yard line with 27 seconds remaining. Many of the 110,615 in attendance at the Big House rushed the field to celebrate the Wolverines' third-straight victory over the Buckeyes.

DEC. 2
BIG TEN CHAMPIONSHIP
NO. 2 U-M 26
NO. 16 IOWA 0

U-M headed into the Big Ten championship game against Iowa as heavy favorites and jumped to a 10-0 lead in the first quarter after a field goal and a Corum touchdown. In the third quarter, Sainristil forced a fumble and Corum scored his second touchdown of the game one play later. In the end, U-M held Iowa to just 155 yards of total offense. Sainristil was named the game's MVP after forcing two fumbles and recording one sack in the game.

OHIO STATE PHOTOS BY ROGER HART AND ERIC BRONSON, MICHIGAN PHOTOGRAPHY | PENN STATE PHOTOS BY LUKE HALES, MICHIGAN PHOTOGRAPHY

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS BLUE

1
In a sea of white and blue in Happy Valley, **Patty Xu, MBA'17**, cheers on the Wolverines to victory over Penn State on Nov. 11.

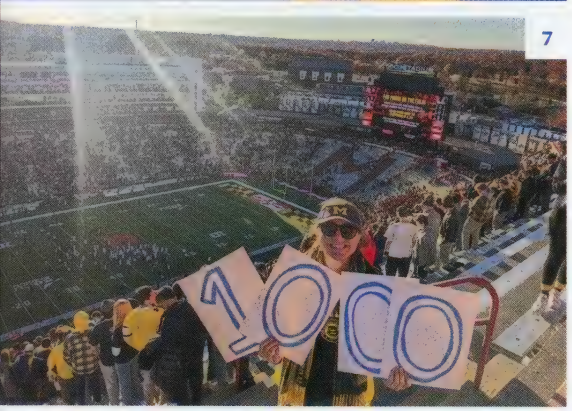
2
Mark Livelsberger, MA'22, and his son Brody linger on the field after the Wolverines beat Ohio State for the third straight year.

3
Jenn, '95, MBA'02, **Brad, '94, MPH'95**, Josh, and Becca Carlson pose for a shot for a shot at the Rose Bowl. Jenn and Brad met in the Michigan Marching Band and marched together in the 1993 Rose Bowl. They were excited to see their son Josh, a junior at Michigan, live out his dream to do it as well.

4
Jane Cooper, '60, MA'72, cheers on the Wolverines against Ohio State. Cooper has been a season ticket holder since her first year as student in 1956.

5
As fans rush the field following the victory over Ohio State, best friends **Jen Hanold, '96**, and **Katie Reece, '97**, capture the moment.

6
Anthony, '15, and Nick Kott scream for joy as the Wolverines beat Ohio State on Nov. 25. The two traveled from New York City and Miami, respectively, to be at The Game.



7
Ariella Rose, '14, MBA'21, celebrates U-M's 1,000th win in program history after the Wolverines beat Maryland 31-24 at Byrd Stadium in Maryland.

8
Rachael Hopkins, '02, takes a moment to soak in the victory over Ohio State after rushing the field at Michigan Stadium.

9
Gilbert Burford, '82, and **Ron Stefanski, '82**, celebrate U-M's win over Ohio State. The two have been best friends since seventh grade and were roommates at U-M. They have attended every Michigan-Ohio State game at the Big House since 1978.

10
Caitlin Cronan, '12, and her husband Matt celebrate the Wolverines' three-peat victory over Ohio State on Nov. 25.

Your Favorite Athlete's Top Picks
Introducing My Ann Arbor, where athletes share what they love most about the Ann Arbor area. Watch defensive MVP, Will Johnson, as he explores his top spots.
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It was Michigan vs. Everybody.
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Our first national championship title of the century.
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94
BIG
ROSE BOWL GAME
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COMING U

Defensive stars Kris Jenkins and Cam Goode celebrate the Wolverines' victory over Alabama in the Rose Bowl.

UP ROSES

PHOTOS BY JEREMY CARROLL

U-M Stuffs Alabama in Overtime

Michigan returned to the Rose Bowl for the first time since 2007, taking on the University of Alabama in Pasadena, California, on Jan. 1 in the semifinals of the College Football Playoff.

The Wolverines entered the game as the No. 1 seed in the nation after Alabama upset Georgia in the SEC Championship game, knocking the Bulldogs from the top slot. That game vaulted the Crimson Tide into the four-team College Football Playoff.

In front of a pro-U-M crowd in the historic stadium, U-M knocked out Alabama 27-20 in an overtime thriller. It was U-M's first bowl game victory since 2016.

Alabama got on the board first with a touchdown in the first quarter. U-M responded with a 10-play drive that was capped with an eight-yard Blake Corum, '23, receiving touchdown. U-M took the lead before the end of the first half with a 38-yard scoring pass from J.J. McCarthy to Tyler Morris.

With just 4:41 remaining in the game, Alabama took a 20-13 lead but the Wolverines' offense responded, marching 75 yards in eight plays. McCarthy hit Roman Wilson, '23, for a four-yard touchdown pass with about 90 seconds remaining.

In overtime, Corum scored on a 17-yard run, breaking multiple tackles near the end zone.

Alabama had a chance to tie it up, but U-M's defense stuffed the Crimson Tide on a fourth-down play on the three-yard line to seal the victory.

McCarthy ended the game with 221 yards passing and three touchdowns. Corum had 89 yards rushing and two total touchdowns.

The win was U-M's first time winning a College Football Playoff game after losing in the previous two seasons' semifinals.

"It's indescribable just because the last two years being able to watch the opposing team celebrate, it's just different when I see the maize and blue confetti on the field," McCarthy said after the game. "I'm nothing without this head coach, nothing without my teammates, nothing without that defense. Everything was so amazing. It's just really, really amazing."

Head coach Jim Harbaugh, '86, credited the players and his assistant coaches.

"My joy, my ecstatic joy is for our players and our coaches and our fans and our families, that they get to experience that joy of being a champion," he said after the game.

As jubilant as the celebration was, McCarthy was focused on the challenge ahead.

"We've got one more game left, so the job is not finished yet," he said.

Rose Bowl

By G.F. Averill, '83

'Twas the week after Christmas and by now we had learned
Which presents were "keepers" (and which to be returned)...
A week full of bowl games promised something for all
That is, if like me, you love college football

The impact of the portal (and "opt outs") on each game
Had rendered most contests disappointingly lame
But today was the Rose Bowl, "Granddaddy of Them All"
As a result of the coin toss, Alabama would kick off the ball

The two "winningest" programs in all of the land
Were now on the field, Oh this will be grand!
The Wolverines, undefeated, could this be our year?
I gathered my munchies, and cracked my first beer

Now McCarthy, now Corum, now Edwards and Wilson
On Sainristil, on Barrett, on Colson and Johnson
Dash away to the end zone, or pull in J.J.'s toss
Or when we're on "D," get a sack for a loss!

The battle was epic, as one might have guessed
But who would prevail and be crowned "The Best"?
As the game went on, they were evenly matched
With each making plays, a good run, or nice catch

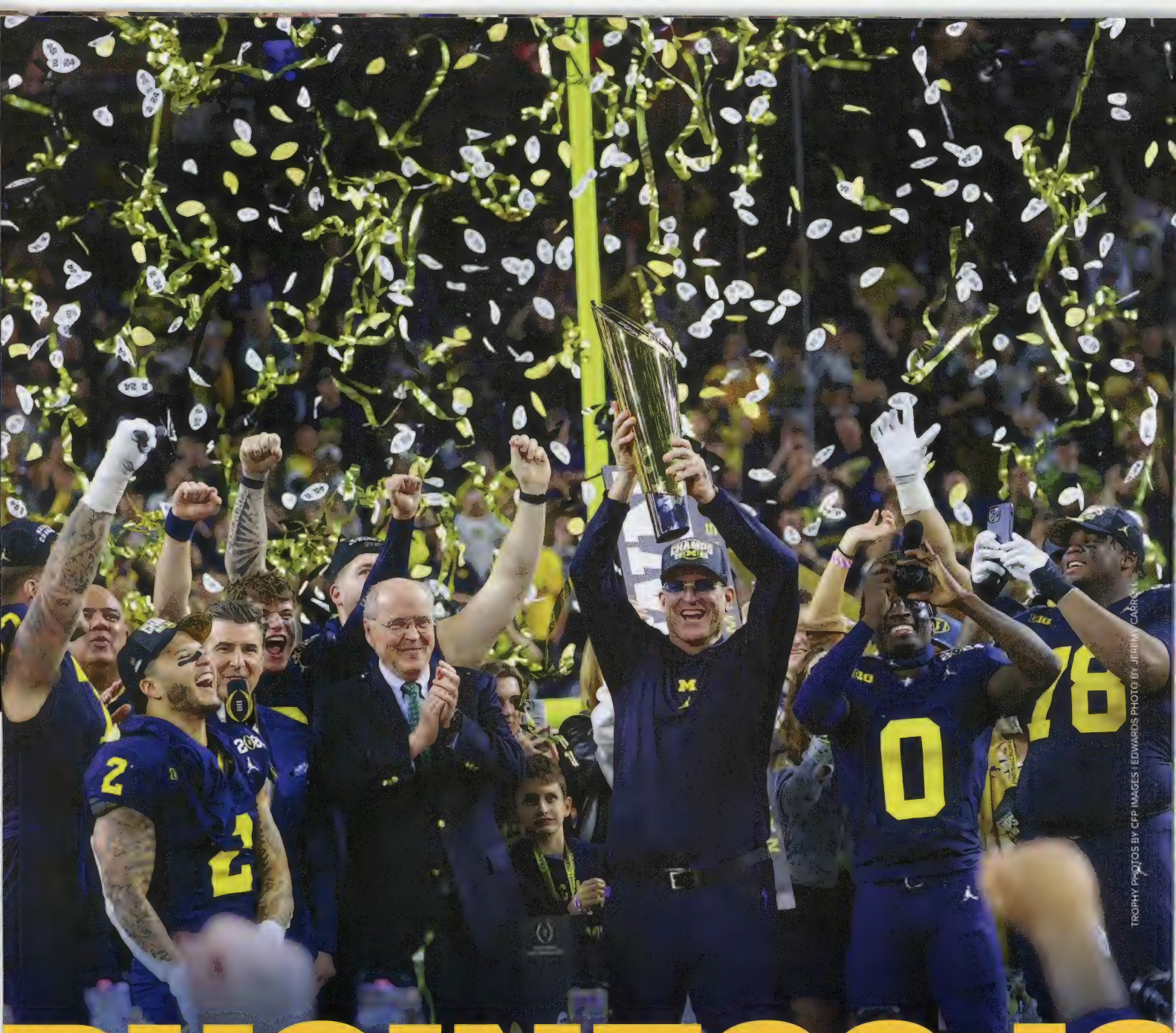
The score was all tied, as the time clock expired
And I, for one, thought that Bama looked tired
The Wolverines took charge on the first overtime drive
And pounding and spinning, Blake kept us alive

With Big Blue up by seven, it was now the Tide's turn
Could Michigan stop them? We would very soon learn
The Victors held fast on Bama's first three tries
Our defense was tough, with a fire in their eyes

Then Milroe ran forward, the game in his hands
Time stood still, and a hush fell over the stands
But as if it had just been destined to be
On the 4th and goal play, he was stopped at the three!

Coach Saban walked off, left to swallow his pride
And there was Coach Harbaugh, his smile a mile wide
And I heard him exclaim, as he boarded the bus
A now familiar question: "Who's got it better than us?"

Nobody!!!!!!!!!!!!



TROPHY PHOTOS BY CFP IMAGES | EDWARDS PHOTO BY JIMMY CARR

BUSINESS IS FINE

U-M dominates the ground game and captures its 12th national title.

The University of Michigan's football team won its 12th national championship and capped off a historic 15-0 season by beating the previously undefeated Washington Huskies 34-13 on Jan. 8 in the College Football Playoff National Championship game in Houston.

The Wolverines dominated the contest on the ground, rushing for 303 yards. Running backs Blake Corum, '23, and Donovan Edwards each scored two touchdowns and secured more than 100 rushing yards each. Corum was named the offensive player of the game and U-M's defensive back Will Johnson was named the defensive player of the game.

Edwards started the scoring with a 41-yard touchdown run on the Wolverines' first possession. He followed that up with a 46-yard touchdown run and U-M added a field goal to take a 17-3 lead after the first quarter.

The Huskies held the Wolverines scoreless in the second quarter, but U-M headed to the locker room up 17-10 at halftime.

On the first play of the second half, Johnson picked off Washington's quarterback, which led to a Wolverines field goal. Up 20-13, U-M put together a drive in the middle of the fourth quarter to put the win out of the Huskies' reach. Quarterback J.J. McCarthy connected with tight end Colston Loveland for a 41-yard pass, and Corum finished the drive with a 12-yard touchdown run.

SHED

"I had this feeling that it was going to be where we are right now. And just all credit goes to the players on this team, everybody in that facility, coach [Jim] Harbaugh."

–J.J. McCarthy

On Washington's next possession, U-M's defensive back Mike Sainristil, '22, erased any doubt on the game's outcome with an interception that was returned 81 yards. Corum scored his second touchdown and, minutes later, maize and blue confetti was raining down on NRG Stadium.

"This is everything I imagined," Corum said after the game during the trophy presentation. "When we decided to come back, there were a lot of us, we said we had unfinished business. I'll leave you all with this: business is finished."

The 15-0 season closed out a momentous run for the Wolverines. After a pandemic-shortened season in 2020, U-M went 12-2 in 2021 and 13-1 in 2022, making the team's record an astonishing 40-3 over the course of the last three years.

After losing to TCU in last year's College Football Playoff, McCarthy watched the Horned Frogs celebrate, and that upset loss helped fuel the team's hunger this season.

"I'd say we came a long way, but in order to accomplish things like this, you've got to go to those dark places where everything's not great," McCarthy said after the Washington game. "And just the response, the urgency right after that last game last year, it was different. I knew it. Just from being on the podium last year and saying we would be back. I knew the guys that were coming back. I had this feeling that it was going to be where we are right now. And just all credit goes to the players on this team, everybody in that facility, coach [Jim] Harbaugh. That man, he's the reason we're here today."

Coach Jim Harbaugh, '86, credited the players and said they unanimously supported one another.

"It couldn't have gone better," he said after the game. "It went exactly how we wanted it to go to win every game. The off-the-field issues — we're innocent and we stood strong and tall because we knew we were innocent. And I'd like to point that out. And these guys are innocent. And overcome that."

Corum said the players had each other's backs all season long.

"Team 144 is a very special team," he said. "And when we talk about brotherhood, Team 144 is the definition of brotherhood."

TOP TWO PHOTOS BY CFP IMAGES | OTHER PHOTOS BY JEREMY CARROLL

NATIONAL CHAMPS 2023
OFFICIAL LOCKER ROOM
NATIONAL CHAMPIONS
1901
1902
1903
1904
1918
1923
1932
1933
1947
1948
1997
2023
B1G
2024
20

TEAM 144
NOTES

RANKED FIRST
in total defense and turnover margin in the nation

BLAKE CORUM
recorded 27 rushing TDs, leading the nation and setting a new U-M record

MIKE SAINRISTIL
finished tied for third in the nation in total interceptions (6)

U-M LED EVERY GAME
at halftime this season

Topped
1,000 WINS
as a program during this season

9th
Rose Bowl win

45th
Big Ten Championship

24th
undefeated season

CORUM AND GRANT PHOTOS ON PAGE 23 BY CFP IMAGES | OTHER PHOTOS BY JEREMY CARROLL

"When we decided to come back, there were a lot of us, we said we had unfinished business. I'll leave you all with this: business is finished."

–Blake Corum, '23

How New Rules Helped Fuel U-M's National Title Run

Harbaugh, '86, calls for student-athletes to share in college football revenue.

After Texas Christain University upset the University of Michigan in the 2022 College Football Playoff semifinals, several players for the Wolverines were considering forgoing the rest of their college careers to move to the NFL.

It would have been a devastating blow to the chances for U-M to three-peat as Big Ten champions and return to the College Football Playoff.

In the past, the decisions for running back Blake Corum, '23, offensive linemen Zak Zinter, '23, and Trevor Keegan, '23, linebacker Michael Barrett, '21, and wide receiver Cornelius Johnson, '22, may not have been difficult. For nearly the entirety of college athletics, players were barred from making income off of their name, image, or likeness (NIL), meaning the only way to cash in on their athletic abilities was to leave college and turn professional.

But new rules enacted in 2021 changed that calculus. And the ability for student-athletes to make money off of their name, image, and likeness may have helped keep U-M together and fuel the 2023 national championship run.

Following the 2022 season, Valiant Management Group's Champions Circle launched the One More Year fund, a crowdfunding campaign specifically designed to "retain key Michigan football players," including Corum, Zinter, Keegan, and Johnson.

Players can't be paid simply for playing football, but can be paid for making appearances, signing items, endorsing products, and holding youth camps. The One More Year fund said it raised more than $135,000 in its campaign and Corum specifically thanked Valiant and the fund for "helping me keep my guys" on X, the social media platform formerly known as Twitter.

In the end, none of the five players left for the NFL early, and all made major contributions to the national championship winning season. They all cited the desire to win a championship as their reason for returning.

"While playing in the NFL has always been a lifelong dream of mine," Zinter wrote on X. "We still have unfinished business. Therefore, I am coming back to finish what we started."

Making a Difference

Jared Wangler, '18, CEO of Valiant Management, previously told Michigan Alum that Corum's decision to return for the 2023 season was helped by NIL, saying he could have left for the NFL to make millions of dollars, "but he's earning at a pretty high level from NIL and doesn't see the immediate financial need to do that."

CORUM GAME PHOTO BY CFP IMAGES | OTHER PHOTOS BY JEREMY CARROLL

"Anybody that's profiting off the student-athletes, me included; anybody who is drawing a salary, making a livelihood ... could take five to 10 percent less of what they're getting." -Jim Harbaugh, '86

Wangler said Corum wanted to improve his draft stock, get more involved in his community, earn his degree, and establish his legacy at U-M.

"Before NIL, it may not have been an easy decision for him because he would have had to weigh the pros and cons of not securing a financial opportunity like going to the NFL," Wangler said.

Corum is one of several student-athletes to give back to the community with some of his NIL funds, donating hundreds of turkeys and other fixings for those in need in Superior Township and Ypsilanti, Michigan, during Thanksgiving.

After the national championship game, Corum said he wanted to be remembered as someone who did good on the field and in the community.

"When I pass away, I honestly don't want to be remembered for a touchdown record or anything like that, but more so just a kind human being that brought smiles to people's faces and just made a difference, made an impact on and off the field," he said.

Corum earned his bachelor's degree in sports management in December 2023, something that he said will set himself up for the next 40 years of his life.

"This is the best university in the world," he said. "I'm so blessed to have a degree from the University."

Powerful Ally

Shortly after winning the national championship, U-M head coach Jim Harbaugh, '86, didn't mince his words when talking about student-athletes being paid. While NIL is one step, he said the student-athletes are risking their health to be out there and should get a slice of the billions of dollars in revenue generated from college football.

"The organizations are fighting hard to keep all the money — the universities, the NCAA, the conferences. And it's long past time to let the student-athletes share in the ever-increasing revenues," he said.

Harbaugh, who left Michigan for a job in the NFL shortly after the season concluded, said there is no voice for the student-athletes right now, and that needs to change. Harbaugh said everyone should help contribute to make sure athletes are properly compensated.

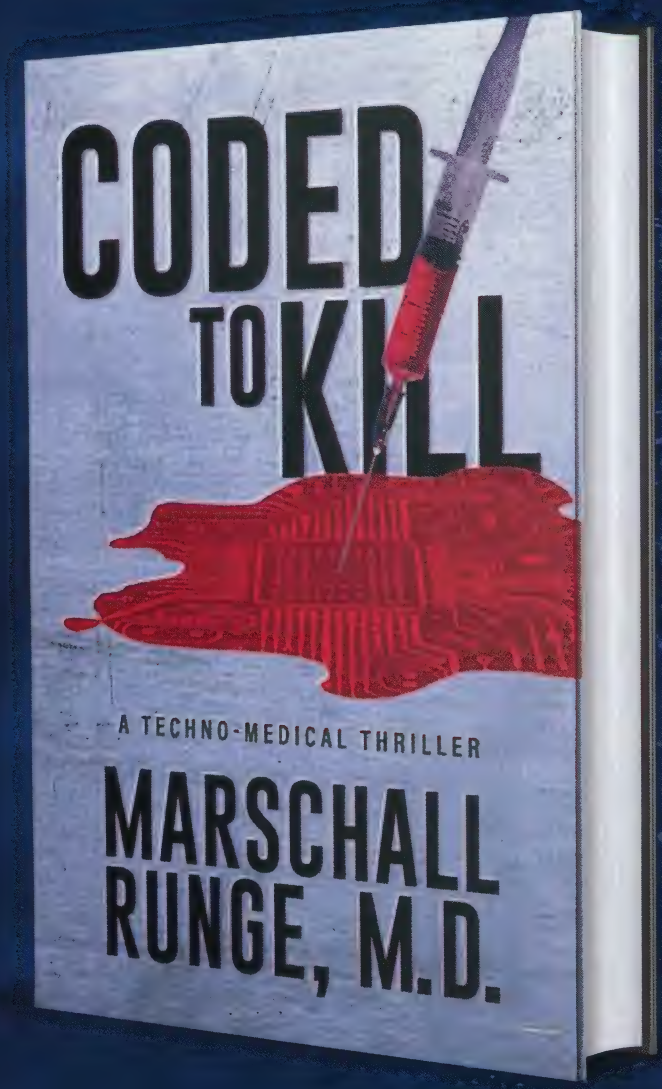
"Anybody that's profiting off the student-athletes, me included; anybody who is drawing a salary, making a livelihood ... could take five to 10 percent less of what they're getting," he said, suggesting that money could go into a pool for the players.

Harbaugh said the student-athletes should push the issue.

"For a long time, people said that unionizing would be bad. If people aren't going to do it — if they're not going to do it out of their own goodwill and do what's right, that's probably the next step," he said. "I have nothing against unions. That's the next step, fellas."

Learn more about how female and Olympic sport athletes are cashing in on name, image, and likeness deals in "A Seat at the Table." →

JEREMY CARROLL is the content strategist for the Alumni Association of the University of Michigan. **STEVE FRIESS** contributed to this piece.



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WHERE IN THE WORLD IS BLUE

1
Chris, '01, and **Amber Johnston, '01**, get ready for the national championship game with their kids in Traverse City, Michigan. Chris had split loyalty as he also earned a degree from the University of Washington.

2
Susan Fletcher-Gutowski, '82, and **Kenneth Gutowski, '80, MBA'85**, displayed a U-M flag on Antarctica on Jan. 11, three days after the Wolverines won the national championship.

3
International alums gathered all over the globe to watch the Wolverines beat the Huskies. Watch parties included those in **South Korea** (pictured), **Hong Kong** (pictured), Singapore, India, and Beijing.

4
Members of the **U-M Black Alumni** affiliate group met at Canyon Creek in Houston before the game. The group had alums from 1990 to 2005 at the gathering.

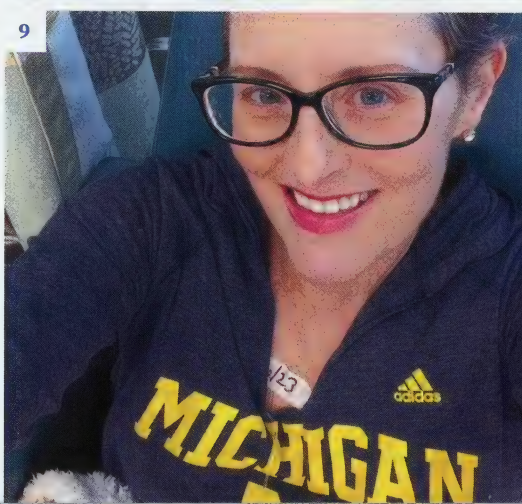
5
Brendan, '09, and **Kaylie Klein, '09**, rooted on the Wolverines with their family from their home in Oregon.

6
Amy Lovrencic Burke, '04, and **Chris Burke, '06**, celebrate the Wolverines' big win in Ann Arbor.

7
Chris, '81, MBA'83, and **Jeanne Leonard, '81**, cheered on the Wolverines in person at NRG Stadium in Houston.

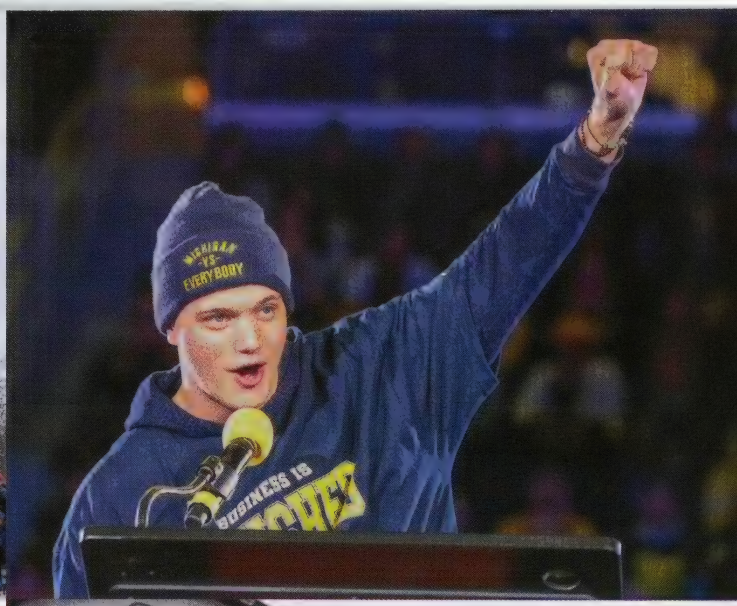
8
Ryan Van Sumeren, '14, **Maggie Chang, '14**, and **Elizabeth Kennedy, '14**, had what they called "the greatest college reunion" while attending the national championship victory in Houston.

9
Sara Dever, '99, at Atlanta Cancer Care in Georgia. Dever was diagnosed in January 2023 with triple-negative breast cancer and is undergoing 16 months of treatment. She says she will "beat cancer like the Wolverines beat everybody!"



A PARTY IN ANN ARBOR

U-M celebrates national title with parade and event at Crisler Center.



Thousands of students, alumni, and Wolverine fans lined State St. on Jan. 13 to celebrate the football team's national championship win.

The band and cheer teams led a parade of trucks carrying the football team from the president's home on S. University to State St. and then on to Schembechler Hall. The evening concluded with a celebration at Crisler Center where the championship trophies were on display and several key players gave speeches.

"They tried to write us off, they tried to count us out — too bad they can't count," said linebacker Michael Barrett, '21, to thunderous cheers.

The sixth-year senior played in 62 games and recorded the most wins of any player in the University's history.

"EVERYBODY SAID MICHIGAN WAS SPECIAL. BUT YOU DON'T KNOW IT UNTIL YOU COME INTO THE CITY OF ANN ARBOR JUST HOW BIG COLLEGE FOOTBALL AND MICHIGAN FOOTBALL IS." -Kris Jenkins

"It has been nothing but an honor and a privilege to be a part of this Michigan family," said defensive lineman Kris Jenkins. "Everybody said Michigan was special. But you don't know it until you come into the city of Ann Arbor just how big college football and Michigan football is."

Offensive lineman Zak Zinter, '23, who broke his leg during the Ohio State game, called U-M fans the best in the nation.

"We came from the bottoms of 2020 to national champions," he said, alluding to the 2020 season where the Wolverines finished 2-4 during the pandemic-shortened year.

Just a day before he announced he would leave U-M for the NFL, quarterback J.J. McCarthy was greeted at the celebration with chants of "one more year."

"Michigan will forever be in my heart, and I will always be proud to be known as a Michigan man. I love you all," he said.

CRISLER PHOTO BY SEAN YUILLE | OTHER PHOTOS BY JEREMY CARROLL

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Notes from the ROSE BOWL

Rachael Schmedlen, '98

"It was all because of my dad," says Rachael Schmedlen, '98, who is wearing her now-vintage sweatshirt from the Wolverines' last Rose Bowl win on Jan. 1, 1998. Her dad grew up in Oakland County, Michigan, but moved to Toledo, Ohio, after college, which is where Schmedlen grew up, on the "battleground of Ohio State/Michigan." Though her dad didn't attend U-M, he was always a Michigan football fan, and Schmedlen was a fan herself by the age of 10.

"He started off by taking me to one home game a season. And then because of that, of course, I'm like, 'I want to go to Michigan for college,'" she says. Schmedlen went to all the football games while getting her chemical engineering degree and continued to come back to Michigan for one or two games with her dad every year while in graduate school in Texas. But her first Rose Bowl was a graduation gift from her dad.

"Since I was 10, I heard stories about the Rose Bowl, the national championship, and we hadn't won one," she says. "And of course, my last year at Michigan, we go, and we're undefeated."

Schmedlen traveled to Pasadena on a student package, and her dad went with her sister and boyfriend to watch the Wolverines defeat Washington State 21-16.

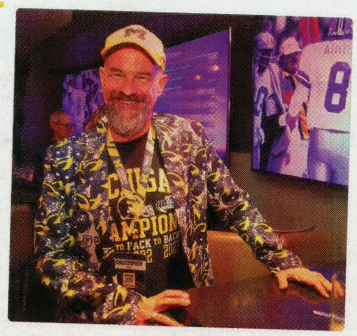
"We all went and got our sweatshirts then. We went and did the parade and everything," she says.

Now, Schmedlen is the director of academic programs at the College of Engineering and a biomedical engineering professor at U-M. Schmedlen's dad died in March 2022, leaving her with the choice of whether or not to keep their season tickets.

"My nephew and my niece are really into the game. So I was like, 'I've got to continue the tradition,' right?," Schmedlen says. "My dad was taking me, I'm taking them."

When the opportunity to attend this year's Rose Bowl presented itself, Schmedlen knew she needed to go and brought her mom, niece, nephew, and the sweatshirt from her first Rose Bowl.

"I had to wear the sweater again to bring the good vibes," she said.



Christopher Haite, '91

"My wife found this for me. She's feeding my habit," says Christopher Haite, '91, while proudly showing off his U-M adorned blazer. It's not the only loud and proud outfit he plans to wear while attending his first Rose Bowl. He has a wild U-M-based Hawaiian shirt that he will wear on New Year's Eve and bib overalls he plans to wear to the game.

This is Haite's sister's, Heidi Haite, '94, third Rose Bowl.

"Our parents went to Michigan. We're diehards," she says. She was in attendance in 1998 when U-M won its last national championship, and says this team feels similarly special.

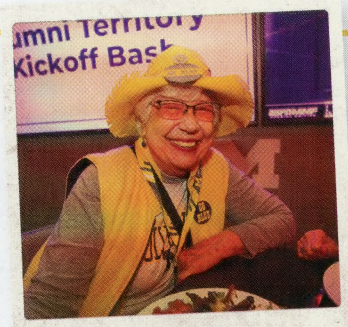
"I feel like the stars have aligned. This is our chance," Heidi says.

"I don't even remember where I got it. I think someone gave it to me and I just started decorating it," says Sylvia Heggen, '63, MA'66, of her unique maize-colored hat with buttons and pieces of flair on it. Heggen got the hat right after she graduated from U-M and started wearing it to football games and hasn't stopped.

"People have identified me on TV because they could see the hat," she says.

Heggen comes from a line of Wolverines, her father and daughter are both U-M alums. This will be the hat's fourth Rose Bowl.

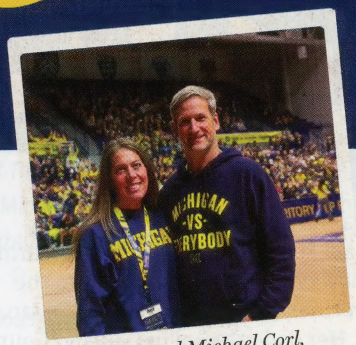
"It had some real roses on it for one game," she says. "I was going to bring silk ones, but that didn't make it."



Sylvia Heggen, '63, MA'66

SCHMEDLEN PHOTO BY KATHERINE FIORILLO | ALL OTHER PHOTOS BY JEREMY CARROLL

Notes from the NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP



Tracy, '99, and Michael Corl, MSE'99, PhD'07

"He was wearing a University of Cincinnati sweatshirt . . . I asked him about it basically before he sat down," says Tracy Corl, '99, remembering the first time she laid eyes on her now-husband of almost 25 years.

Someone was in Michael Corl's, MSE'99, PhD'07, seat, which led him to sit next to Tracy on their way to the Rose Bowl during the 1997 season.

"We were on the plane, New Year's Eve 1997. We played cards on the plane and parted ways in the airport," she says. They found each other again the next day.

"Back then, you got a voucher for tickets on campus. So when you got to the Rose Bowl, you had to go and turn in your voucher for actual tickets. Everybody was kind of crisscrossing doing that, and that's how we ran into each other," Michael Corl says.

Michael was at U-M getting dual master's degrees while in the Coast Guard, and Tracy was in undergrad. They ran into each other again back on campus, started dating, and got engaged on New Year's Eve 1998, exactly one year after they sat next to each other on the plane.

The two were married in October 1999 and have three children together, Sydney, Jillian, and Jackson.

"Our first daughter is named Sydney Rose," Tracy Corl says. "Rose, for the Rose Bowl."

Becky Andrusiak, '92 and Michelle Dilley, '93

"Jim Harbaugh, '86, has been my favorite person since 1985. I have great love for him," says Becky Andrusiak, '92, right. So when Michelle Dilley, '93, moved in next door to her in Stockwell Hall and put up a calendar of the Chicago Bears football team called "Bear But Not Naked," Andrusiak keyed in on the Harbaugh month.

"I saw it, and I think I went nuts. She went in, ripped it off, gave it to me, and I still have it," Andrusiak says. The two became fast friends and college roommates. More than 30 years later, they traveled to Houston from the west side of Michigan and decided to room together again.

Today, both are married with three kids, but they call one another their soulmates. Dilley is godmother to Andrusiak's daughter Madeline (named in honor of Madelon Stockwell, the dorm where she met her husband Rob Andrusiak, '94), and Becky Andrusiak is godmother to Dilley's daughter Gabrielle. The two couldn't miss the opportunity to potentially see their beloved Wolverines take home a national championship.

"I know they're going to win today," Dilley says. "I just feel it. It's going to happen. This team is just something special."

"Each coffee has an inspired playlist that pairs with it," says Tio Fallen, MSE'07, who is combining engineering, music, and passion for roasting to make the perfect cup of coffee in downtown Houston.

Tio Fallen and his wife, Kenzel Fallen, founded Three Keys Coffee, which sells coffee beans and blends at retailers across the U.S. and has a cafe in Finn Hall in Houston. The duo started the business in 2019 and opened their stall in 2023.

Tio Fallen's engineering degree from U-M helps him create the roasts that earned Three Keys Coffee the title of Best Coffee Roaster in Texas by Food and Wine.

"I like to think about coffee roasting, in particular, as a combination of art and science," he says.

Tio found U-M through the Summer Research Opportunity Program during his junior year of undergrad. He loved being on campus and pursued his master's in mechanical engineering in Ann Arbor.

"It was a great, great experience. I love the University," he says. "That's why, with the shop, there's little homages to the Maize and Blue." Behind the counter, there's a winged football helmet, a U-M football book on display, and Three Keys Coffee merch in maize and blue.

"I put that helmet up specifically for [the national championship] weekend as well as the Michigan football book. But everything else has been incorporated into our branding since day one," he says.

Tio Fallen, MSE'07

CORL AND FALLEN PHOTO BY KATHERINE FIORILLO | ANDRUSIAK AND DILLEY PHOTO BY JEREMY CARROLL

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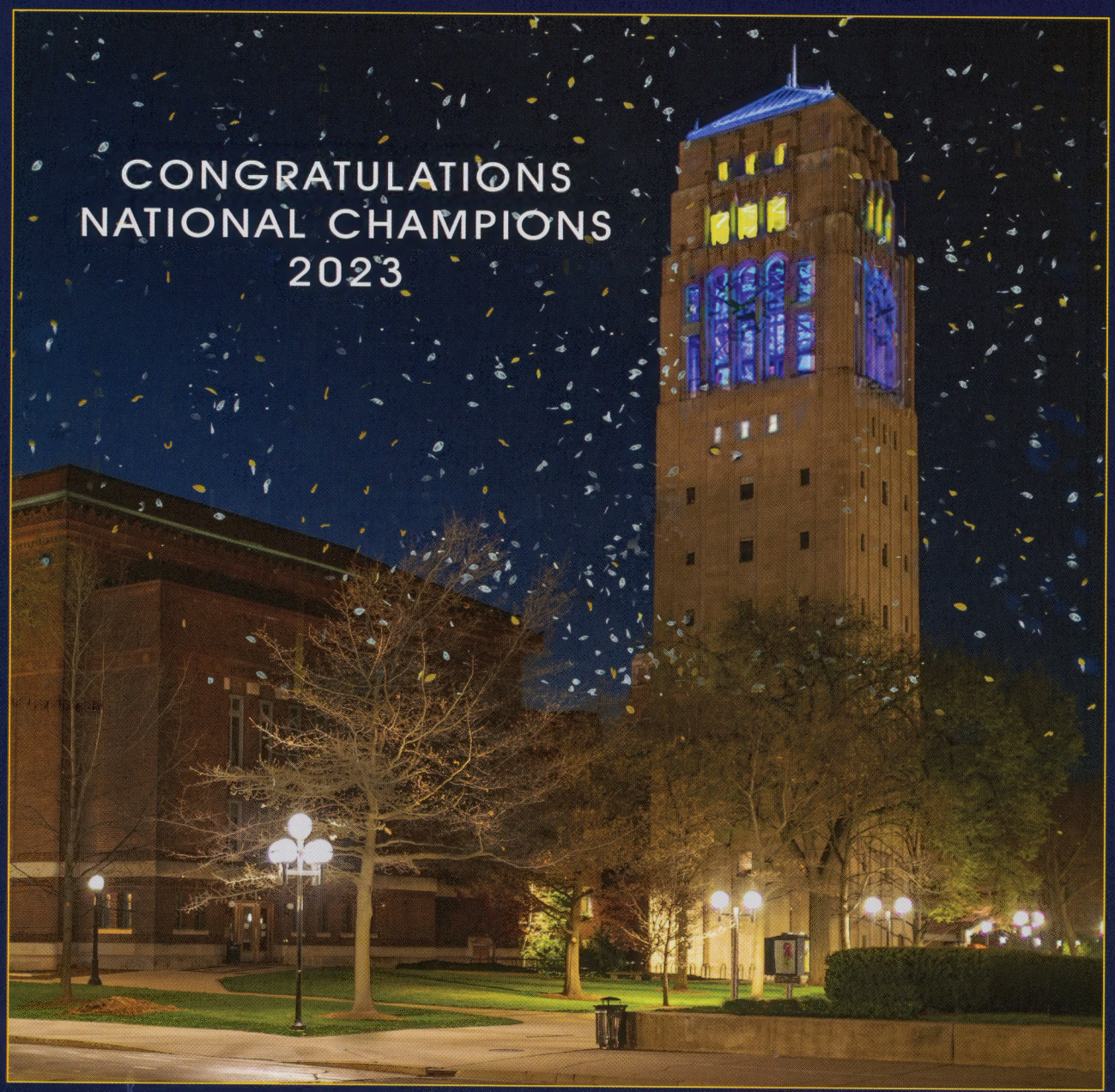

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